

Say hello to Generation Alpha



By [Sean Sullivan](#)

26 Sep 2019

Bracing and gearing our businesses for the onslaught of the future consumer is key to remaining relevant in the media industry and beyond.



Photo by Kiana Bosman on Unsplash

The new human is wired very differently and if we don't comprehend their world, we will fail to connect with them.

Generation Z is the first true digital natives; their brains are mapped differently. They don't know a world without smartphones, Google or voice command. So what can we expect from their children, Generation Alpha? It's a scary thought that perhaps we can't fully comprehend yet.

Coined by [sociologist Mark McCrindle](#), the term Generation Alpha applies to children born between 2010 and 2025. According to McCrindle, an estimated 2.5 million Alphas are born globally every week.

What consumer businesses need to remember is that these generations don't wait around to ask questions; they're more than comfortable just searching for the information they need online. As such, they need to be taught differently and brands need to interact with them and sell to them in a very different way.



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Generation Alpha is a growing and lucrative consumer market. Collectively their spending power is huge. These kids are marketing's newest power brokers. They're already playing an outsize role in household buying decisions, even though the oldest among them is only nine years old.

These children are as comfortable swiping a tablet or speaking to a voice assistant than most of their adult relatives are. They pick up tech intuitively and constantly consume information and entertainment. They're learning soft skills at an unprecedented rate: problem-solving, multi-tasking and quick thinking.

Their biggest desire: Devices and screen time.




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The enhanced human


Unlike their parents, the millennials or informally known as digital natives, many Alphas will have a digital footprint before they are even born. Celebrity kids already have Instagram accounts, managed by their parents.

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My Northie girl is the ultimate fashionista! She comes with me to fabric stores

and picks out what she likes and for our Japan trip I let her style herself. I should have let her style me too lol. She loves it. She's having fun and I am so happy she's so expressive. 🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉

A post shared by [Kim Kardashian West \(@kimkardashian\)](#) on Aug 11, 2019 at 6:51pm PDT

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Generation Alpha is the first group who will be immersed in technology their entire lives. These kids are also referred to as the Glass Generation because their glass-fronted devices will be completely integrated with their lifestyle – they will not know communication without it.

This generation might be the first to truly embody the enhancement to humanity that technology can be, in their lifestyle and perception:

- They will be living at 5G speeds in terms of internet and the rate of consumption. It's instant gratification like never before.
- It's the five-year-old who can rock a YouTube search before they can read.
- They're expected to be the wealthiest, most highly-educated and technologically-connected group to date.
- Studying to master's level will become the norm for most.
- The rest will avoid the higher education system altogether and opt for online learning (self-learning is a norm for these kids).
- They will take on jobs that don't yet exist.



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Demanding

It's not just the instant gratification at the speed of 5G that makes this generation demanding, it's their slightly scary level of self-assurance too. They live and consume on their terms.

They only know the world as one of instant and self-curated access. They navigate Netflix in their sleep, Siri and Alexa are their Aunties, and they won't believe you when you try and explain the world before Spotify.

They have every tool they could ever need at the tips of their fingers and on voice command.



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Collective mindset

Although they're engrossed in screens, this generation may be the one to fix the disconnection and loneliness of which millennials have taken the brunt. Generation Alpha may be the ones to successfully bridge the gap between digital worlds and the real world because they recognise the entire globe as one big group of friends.

Marketing to these children requires simple, detailed content – which will assist in cultivating consumer loyalty at a young age. From the onset, Alphas would have been widely exposed to multiple digital platforms.

Businesses will have to adapt to radically new ways of interacting and communicating with Alphas, compared to their parents. Generation Alpha's consumer experience will have to be seamless and integrated, with a personalised online experience.



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This will provide new opportunities for marketers. Alpha kids are watching less TV than previous generations, so marketers need different ways to reach them such as tapping into a rising crop of child influencers who have their own Instagram pages and YouTube channels with subscriber counts well into the millions.

They are digitally-savvy humanoids and social media connoisseurs; and I'm looking forward to their impact on society.

ABOUT SEAN SULLIVAN

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